

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

May 22, 1944

No. 88-g

Subject: Poultry Culling

Field Distribution: Extension Editors, Directors, Specialists, Economists;
AAA Committeemen; OD Marketing Reports Chiefs; FSA Regional
Information Chiefs.

Suggested Use: Background information.

The Problem:

To meet insofar as possible the demands for eggs and poultry with available feed.

The Why:

There are more than enough hens on American farms to produce the eggs we need.

Since U. S. producers were first called upon in 1941 to meet wartime goals in essential foods, egg production has expanded by 49 percent over the pre-war years 1935-39. At the same time production of all other livestock has increased tremendously in keeping with wartime needs.

Today, we, as a Nation, face the necessity of maintaining production of all war and civilian needs in poultry, eggs, meats, and dairy products as close to goal levels as possible. Feed supply has become the limiting factor. There is not enough feed to provide for any further expansion in any one of these foods. If poultry and egg production were to continue to expand at the rate it has expanded in the past 3 years it would result in a smaller than necessary production in dairy products or in livestock for slaughter. Poultry and eggs also would be scarce, if producers of livestock and dairy products used more than their share of the Nation's feed supply.

The problem is one of supply, proper distribution, and conservation of available feed.

The How:

Under an orderly plan of continuous culling, several steps may be taken by poultry and egg producers which will serve in a large measure to adjust flock numbers to feed supply and to get the utmost benefit from the quantity of feed available for poultry. These steps are:

1. Continuous culling of low-producing hens.
2. Culling of broody hens.
3. Culling of early moulters.
4. Elimination of roosters following the breeding season.

Just as important in bringing about the balance between available feed and poultry numbers is the adjustment needed in broiler production. The broiler goal for 1944 was set at 84 percent of 1943 production. Thus far this year production has been substantially in excess of the goal.

Background

For the first 3 months of 1944 egg production in the U. S. was 11 percent greater than the record production during the same months in 1943. The 2 percent increase asked for by the WFA would have assured adequate quantities of eggs to meet all civilian and wartime needs during this period and for the year as a whole. The result of overproduction has been lower prices to farmers for eggs so far this year, the U. S. average farm price being 27.1 cents per dozen (90 percent of parity) in April this year, against 33.7 cents for the same month last year when it was better than 100 percent of parity. On April 1, laying flocks on U. S. farms were 5.1 percent larger than on the same date in 1943. But the average increase shown does not tell the whole story. In many of the major egg-producing states laying flocks on April 1 ranged from 8 to 11.5 percent larger, as indicated by the attached table.

Hens and Pullets of Laying Age - March 1 and April 1, 1943 and 1944

State	March 1 1943	March 1 1944	Increase or Decrease		April 1 1943	Thousands	April 1 1944	Thousands	Percent	Increase or Decrease
Maine	2,172	2,240	+ 3.1		2,128	1/	2,061	2,128	- 3.1	
New Hampshire	1,827	2,035	+11.4		1,717	2/	1,913	1,717	+11.4	
Vermont	944	1,010	+ 7.0		916	3/	960	916	+ 4.8	
Massachusetts	4,479	4,685	+ 4.6		4,389	2/	4,544	4,389	+ 3.5	
Rhode Island	418	444	+ 6.2		397	2/	435	397	+ 9.6	
Connecticut	2,546	2,749	+ 8.0		2,419	2/	2,639	2,419	+ 9.1	
New York	13,277	13,565	+ 2.2		12,786	3/	12,968	12,786	+ 1.4	
New Jersey	6,248	6,725	+ 7.6		6,198	2/	6,597	6,198	+ 6.4	
Pennsylvania	18,018	18,678	+ 3.7		16,991	2/	18,286	16,991	+ 7.6	
North Atlantic	49,929	52,131	+ 4.4		47,941		50,403	47,941	+ 5.1	
Ohio	19,891	20,668	+ 3.9		18,439		20,172	18,439	+ 9.4	
Indiana	14,693	14,479	- 1.5		13,983		14,016	13,983	+ 0.2	
Illinois	20,936	22,497	+ 7.5		20,622		21,845	20,622	+ 5.9	
Michigan	11,627	12,576	+ 8.2		10,918		11,834	10,918	+ 8.4	
Wisconsin	15,613	17,096	+ 9.5		14,864		16,566	14,864	+11.5	
East North Central	82,760	87,316	+ 5.5		78,831		84,433	78,831	+ 7.1	
Minnesota	24,687	26,606	+ 7.8		24,514		25,276	24,514	+ 3.1	
Iowa	31,683	35,046	+10.6		31,683		33,154	31,683	+ 4.6	
Missouri	22,852	24,035	+ 5.2		22,669		22,689	22,669	+ 0.1	
North Dakota	5,611	5,731	+ 2.1		5,431		5,674	5,431	+ 4.5	
South Dakota	8,579	9,501	+10.7		8,459		9,377	8,459	+10.9	
Nebraska	14,639	15,907	+ 8.3		14,278		15,398	14,278	+ 7.8	
Kansas	16,820	17,152	+ 2.0		16,130		16,346	16,130	+ 1.3	
West North Central	124,921	133,978	+ 7.3		123,164		127,914	123,164	+ 3.9	

See footnotes at the end of table.

Hens and Pullets of Laying Age - March 1 and April 1, 1943 and 1944, Cont'd

State	March 1 1943 Thousands	March 1 1944 Thousands	Increase or Decrease Percent	April 1 1943 Thousands	April 1 1944 Thousands	Increase or Decrease Percent
Delaware	885	936	+ 5.8	865	2/ 923	+ 6.7
Maryland	3,016	3,258	+ 8.0	2,916	2/ 3,203	+ 9.8
Virginia	7,888	8,264	+ 4.8	7,604	2/ 8,165	+ 7.4
West Virginia	3,968	4,023	+ 1.4	3,754	2/ 3,914	+ 4.3
North Carolina	9,197	10,174	+10.6	9,031	3/ 9,503	+ 5.2
South Carolina	3,340	3,603	+ 7.9	3,206	2/ 3,470	+ 8.2
Georgia	6,792	6,909	+ 1.7	6,792	1/ 6,757	- 0.5
Florida	1,781	1,752	- 1.6	1,900	1/ 1,827	- 3.8
South Atlantic	36,867	38,919	+ 5.6	36,068	37,762	+ 4.7
Kentucky	10,481	10,936	+ 4.3	10,324	3/10,630	+ 3.0
Tennessee	10,287	10,566	+ 2.7	9,999	2/10,566	+ 5.7
Alabama	6,805	7,368	+ 8.3	7,220	1/ 6,970	- 3.5
Mississippi	6,736	7,308	+ 8.5	6,884	3/ 7,308	+ 6.2
Arkansas	7,514	8,234	+ 9.6	7,228	3/ 7,921	+ 9.6
Louisiana	3,854	4,281	+11.1	4,112	3/ 4,367	+ 6.2
Oklahoma	12,198	12,957	+ 6.2	12,088	2/12,840	+ 6.2
Texas	27,215	30,160	+10.8	27,215	2/30,160	+10.8
South Central	85,090	91,810	+ 7.9	85,070	90,762	+ 6.7
Montana	1,937	2,071	+ 4.2	1,878	2/ 1,963	+ 4.5
Idaho	2,076	2,485	+19.7	2,076	2/ 2,388	+15.0
Wyoming	811	848	+ 4.6	752	2/ 808	+ 7.4
Colorado	3,900	3,972	+ 1.8	3,674	2/ 3,972	+ 8.1
New Mexico	1,247	1,258	+ 0.9	1,247	1/ 1,232	- 1.2
Arizona	563	529	- 6.0	556	1/ 523	- 5.9
Utah	2,122	2,422	+14.1	2,035	2/ 2,335	+14.7
Nevada	252	283	+12.3	243	2/ 271	+11.5
Washington	5,965	5,710	- 4.3	5,709	1/ 5,453	- 4.5
Oregon	3,310	3,164	- 4.4	3,201	3/ 3,202	+0.03
California	14,655	13,942	- 4.9	13,908	1/13,719	- 1.4
Western	36,888	36,684	- 0.6	35,279	35,866	+ 1.7
United States	416,455	440,838	+ 5.9	406,353	427,140	+ 5.1

1/At present no culling of flocks required; 2/Rigid Culling necessary to reduce flocks; 3/Small amount of culling required.

The following chart shows the proportionate consumption of feed anticipated between October 1, 1943, and September 30, 1944, by various classes of livestock and poultry to be produced within 1944 goals. It is obvious from this chart, that production of all livestock must be brought in balance with available feed, and that an increase in the production of one kind will mean reduced production of other kinds.

